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Y dos apuntantes

— Vaca.

Espagnol, Demofilo, Adivinanzas, p. 286.

Dos punxents

Dos lluent

Cuatro tups, tups

Y un ventador de mosques

— Le bou.

Iles Baléares, Demofilo, p. 363.

Alcée Fortier.

LOUISIANIAN NURSERY-TALES.

I.

LA GRAISSE.

YAVÉ eune madame ki té gagnin cate filles. Yé té si joli, ké tout mouné té oulé marié avec yé. Yé té pélé yé : La Graisse, Dépomme, Banane, et Pacane. La Graisse té pli joli, mais li té jamin sorti dans soleil pasqué yé té pér li va fonne. La Graisse té sorti tou les jou dans eune bel carosse en or. Fi léroi té oua li tou les jou, mais La Graisse té si joli et carosse li té si apé brillé¹ ké so zié té fait li mal ; li té gagnin pou frotté yé pou oua clair. Fi léroi té limmin La Graisse : li couri chez moman la pou mandé li pou marié avec La Graisse, mais moman la ki té connin La Graisse té pli joli, li té oulé marié les otes avant.

Li pélé Dépomme : "Dépomme oh ! orimomo, orimomo !" Dépomme vini, mais michié la gardé li ben, li dit c'est pas cila là mo oulé, li sré gaté trop vite.

Moman pélé : "Banane oh ! orimomo, orimomo !" Banane vini, Michié té pas oulé, li dit la connin pourri trop vite.

Moman pélé : "Pacane oh ! orimomo, orimomo !" Pacane vini. Michié dit pacane va vini rance.

Enfin moman pélé La Graisse : "La Graisse oh ! orimomo, orimomo." La Graisse vini. Sito li oua La Graisse, li prend li et ménin li dans so bel la maison, et li marié li.

Fi léroi té couri la chasse tou les jou : pendant li té pas la, domestiques té fait la Graisse tout plein la misère. Li té pér dit so mari, et li té fait tout ça yé oulé.

Eune jou kisinière la dit, li vé pas fait dinin. I faut La Graisse fait li. Pauvre La Graisse li crié, li crié, mais yé forcé li pour resté coté di fé : mais li tapé fonne fonne. A la fin yavé pli qué La

¹ *Li té apé brillé.* A peculiar expression and genuine patois. From the French, *Il était après (à) briller.*

Graisse partout, la kisine la té tout plein. Piti zozo La Graisse oua ça, li trempé so zaile dans La Graisse.¹ Li volé dans bois coté michié la, si batte so zaile dans so figure.

Michié la oua La Graisse ki té on so zaile, li pensé so chère La Graisse, li galopé chez li, li trouvé so femme tout fonne par terre. Li té si chagrin, li ramassé tout La Graisse, et metté li dans vié baignoire, et quand La Graisse la vini frêt, li té eune femme encor. Mais li té jamin si jolie com avant, pasqué la terre té mélé avé li,² et li té tout jaune et sale. So mari té pli limmin li et renvoyé li coté so moman.

[*Translation.*]

There was once a lady who had four daughters. They were so pretty that everybody wanted to marry them. They were called La Graisse, Dépomme, Banane, and Pacane. La Graisse was the prettiest, but she never went out in the sun, because they were afraid that she would melt. La Graisse used to go out every day in a beautiful golden carriage. The son of the king saw her every day, but La Graisse was so pretty and the carriage shone so much that it dazzled his eyes, and he had to rub them in order to be able to see. The king's son was in love with La Graisse. He ran to the mother to ask her to let him marry her; but the mother, who knew that La Graisse was the prettiest of her daughters, wanted to marry the others first. She called Dépomme: "Dépomme oh! orimomo, orimomo!" Dépomme came, but the gentleman looked at her well, and said that it was not the one he wanted; she would spoil too quickly. The mother called: "Banane oh! orimomo, orimomo!" Banane came. The gentleman did not want her; she would rot too quickly.

The mother called: "Pacane oh! orimomo, orimomo!" Pacane came. The gentleman said Pacane would become rancid. At last the mother called: "La Graisse oh! orimomo, orimomo!" La Graisse came. As soon as he saw her he took her, and led her to his beautiful house and married her.

The king's son went hunting every day. While he was not there, the servants tormented La Graisse. She was afraid to tell her husband, and she did all they wanted. One day the cook told her that she did not want to cook the dinner; that La Graisse had to do it herself. Poor La Graisse! she cried and cried, but they forced her to stay by the fire. But she was melting and melting: in the end,

¹ *Piti zozo trempé so zaile dans La Graisse.* A quaint idea, but very pretty: the little bird which dips its wings into the melted princess, and brings the sad tidings to the prince.

² *La terre té mélé avé li.* A strange idea, but quite philosophical. Alas! poor La Graisse was no longer pretty, and she was repudiated by her husband. Such is the inconstancy of man!

there was nothing but La Graisse (grease) everywhere; the kitchen was full of it.

The little bird of La Graisse saw that. It dipped its wings into the grease; it flew in the wood to the gentleman; it flapped its wings in his face. The gentleman saw the grease which was on the wings; he thought of his dear La Graisse; he galloped home; he found his wife all melted on the floor. He was so sorry that he picked up all the grease and put it in an old bath-tub, and when the grease was cold it became a woman again. But she was never as pretty as before; for the earth had mixed with the grease, and she was all yellow and dirty. Her husband did not love her any more, and sent her back to her mother.

II.

DÉZEF KI PARLÉ.¹

Yavé eune foi eune madame ki té gagnin dé fille yé té pélé Rose et Blanche. Rose té méchant, é Blanche té bon. Moman la té limmin mié Rose quand minme li té méchant, pasqué li té tou craché so moman.² Li té fé Blanche fé tou l'ouvrage, pendan ké Rose té assite apé bercé.³ Eune jour li voyé Blanche coté pi cherché dolo dans eune baquet. Quand Blanche rivé là, li oua eune vié fame ki di li: "Tan pri, mo piti, donne moin enne pé dolo, mo ben soif."

"Oui, tante," dit Blanche, "ala dolo," é Blanche rincé so baquet é donnin li bon dolo fraiche pou li boi.

"Merci, mo piti, to eune bon fille, bon Djé va béni toi."

Kèke jou après ça, moman la ti si mauvais pou Blanche ké li chappé dans bois. Li té apé crié, pas connin où pou couri pasqué li té pér tournin chez li, quand li oua minme vié femme ki té apé marché devant li.

"Ah! mo piti, cofer ta pé crié, ki ça ki fé toi mal?"

"Ah! mo tante, moman batte moin et mo pér couri dans cabane."

"Eh bien, mo piti, vini avé moin, ma donne toi soupé et couché. Mais faut to prometté moin to va fai tout ça mo va di toi et to va pas ri arien to va oua."

Li prend la main Blanche. Yé commencé marché dans bois; a misire yé vancé, zéronce té apé tchoulé devant yé et fermin apé derrière yé dos. Eune pé pli loin, Blanche oua dé la hache ki tapé batte ensemb. Li trouvé ça ben drole, mais li pas di arien.

¹ This is an interesting story, founded, probably, on one of Perrault's tales, but with many characteristic negro expressions and incidents. I see in *Mélusine* of January 20, 1877, a story recorded by M. Loys Brueyre, "Les Trois Oeufs," which resembles somewhat our Louisiana tale.

² *Li té tou craché so moman.* "She was the very picture of her mother." A very common saying, and quite correct, in spite of its vulgarity.

³ *Assite apé bercé.* The height of laziness, to sit down in a rocking-chair (*berceuse*), and to do nothing.

Yé marché pli loin, tiens côté dé bras qu' apé batte ensemb ; eune pé pli loin, dé zambes : enfin li oua dé la tête qui apé batte ensemb, ki di Blanche, "Bon jou, mo piti, bon Djé va idé toi."

Enfin yé rivé dans cabane vié fame la, qui di Blanche, "Fé di fé mo piti, pou tchoui soupé ;" et li assite coté la chimnin et li oté so la tête, li metté li en haut so ginou et li commencé cherché dépou.¹

Blanche trouvé ca ben drole, li té pér, mais li pas di arien. Vié fame remette so la tête en place é donne Blanche eune gros dézo pou mette en haut di fé pou yé soupé, Blanche metté dézo dans chaudière, tiens, dans eune piti moment, chaudière té plein bon la vianne.

Li donnin Blanche eune graine di riz pou pilé dan pilon, voila pilon ki vini plein di riz.

Après yé té soupé, vié fame dit : "Blanche, tan pri, mo piti, gratté mo dos." Blanche gratté so dos, mais so la main té tout coupé, vié fame la té gagnin verre bouteille en ho so dos.² Quand li voir la main Blanche apé saignin, li jiste soufflé en ho là, la main guéri. Quand Blanche levé, lendimin matin vié fame la dit : "As ter faut to couri chez toi, mais comme toi cé eune bon fille, mo oulé fé toi cadeau dézef ki parlé. Couri dans poulailler, tout dézef qui va di to prend moïn, il faut to prend yé, tout dézef qui va di pas prend moïn, faut pas prend yé. Quand to va dans chimin to va jété dézef yé derrière to la tête pou cassé yé."

A mesure Blanche marché li cassé dézef : voila tout plein joli kichoge ki sorti dan dézef layé : diamant, l'or, bel voiture, belle la robe. Quand li rivé chez so moman, li té gagnin tant belle kichoge, ça té rempli la maison ; aussite so moman té ben content oua li.

Lendimin li dit Rose, faut to couri dans bois cherché pou minme vié fame là, i faut to gagnin plein belle robe comme Blanche. Rose couri dans bois, li rencontré vié fame la qui di li vini dans so cabane, mais quand li oua la hache ki apé batte, la zambe ki apé batte, la tête ki apé batte, vié fame ki oté so la tête pou gratté so dépou, li commencé ri et moqué tout ça li té oua, aussite vié fame la dit li : "Ah ! mo piti, to pas bon fille, bon Djé va pini toi."

Mais lendimin matin, li dit li, "mo vé pas renvoyé toi sans arien, couri dans poulailler, et prend dézef ki va dit prend moi, faut pas to prend cilayé ki dit va pas prend moïn."

Rose couri dans poulailler, tous dézef commencé crie : "Prend moïn, pas prend moïn." Rose té si méchant li dit : "Ah oui, vous

¹ *Li commencé cherché dépou.* She placed her head on her knees, and began to look for lice. This sentence proves that the story, whatever may have been its origin, was considerably modified by the negroes. Looking for lice in the heads of their children was one of the favorite occupations of negro mothers.

² *Vié fame la té gagnin verre bouteille en ho so dos.* This incident is exactly the same in M. Brueyre's tale. It is strange how the same idea may originate in different countries, among people of the same race.

ote dit, pas prend moin, mais c'est jiste ca moin mo oulé. Li prend tou dézef qui dit 'pas prend moin' et li parti avé yé. A mesure li marché li cassé dézef, voila eune tas serpent, crapaud, gournouille, ki commencé gallopé derrier li yé ti gagnin minme plein fouet qui té ape taillé li raide comme tout. Rose galopé, apé poussé décri. Li rivé chez so moman, li té si lasse li pas capab parlé. Quand so moman oua tout bête et tout fouet qui té apé suive li, li té si colère, li renvoyé li, comme chien, et dit li couri resté dans bois.

[*Translation.*]

THE TALKING EGGS.

There was once a lady who had two daughters ; they were called Rose and Blanche. Rose was bad, and Blanche was good ; but the mother liked Rose better, although she was bad, because she was her very picture. She would compel Blanche to do all the work, while Rose was seated in her rocking-chair. One day she sent Blanche to the well to get some water in a bucket. When Blanche arrived at the well, she saw an old woman, who said to her : " Pray, my little one, give me some water ; I am very thirsty." " Yes, aunt," said Blanche, " here is some water ;" and Blanche rinsed her bucket, and gave her good fresh water to drink. " Thank you, my child, you are a good girl ; God will bless you."

A few days after, the mother was so bad to Blanche that she ran away into the woods. She cried, and knew not where to go, because she was afraid to return home. She saw the same old woman, who was walking in front of her. " Ah ! my child, why are you crying ? What hurts you ?" " Ah, aunt, mamma has beaten me, and I am afraid to return to the cabin." " Well, my child, come with me ; I will give you supper and a bed ; but you must promise me not to laugh at anything which you will see." She took Blanche's hand, and they began to walk in the wood. As they advanced, the bushes of thorns opened before them, and closed behind their backs. A little farther on, Blanche saw two axes, which were fighting ; she found that very strange, but she said nothing. They walked farther, and behold ! it was two arms which were fighting ; a little farther, two legs ; at last, she saw two heads which were fighting, and which said : " Blanche, good-morning, my child ; God will help you." At last they arrived at the cabin of the old woman, who said to Blanche : " Make some fire, my child, to cook the supper ;" and she sat down near the fireplace, and took off her head. She placed it on her knees, and began to louse herself. Blanche found that very strange ; she was afraid, but she said nothing. The old woman put back her head in its place, and gave Blanche a large bone to put

on the fire for their supper. Blanche put the bone in the pot. Lo ! in a moment the pot was full of good meat.

She gave Blanche a grain of rice to pound with the pestle, and thereupon the mortar became full of rice. After they had taken their supper, the old woman said to Blanche : "Pray, my child, scratch my back." Blanche scratched her back, but her hand was all cut, because the old woman's back was covered with broken glass. When she saw that Blanche's hand was bleeding, she only blew on it, and the hand was cured.

When Blanche got up the next morning, the old woman said to her : "You must go home now, but as you are a good girl I want to make you a present of the talking eggs. Go to the chicken-house ; all the eggs which say 'Take me,' you must take them ; all those which will say 'Do not take me,' you must not take. When you will be on the road, throw the eggs behind your back to break them."

As Blanche walked, she broke the eggs. Many pretty things came out of those eggs. It was now diamonds, now gold, a beautiful carriage, beautiful dresses. When she arrived at her mother's, she had so many fine things that the house was full of them. Therefore her mother was very glad to see her. The next day, she said to Rose : "You must go to the woods to look for this same old woman ; you must have fine dresses like Blanche."

Rose went to the woods, and she met the old woman, who told her to come to her cabin ; but when she saw the axes, the arms, the legs, the heads, fighting, and the old woman taking off her head to louse herself, she began to laugh and to ridicule everything she saw. Therefore the old woman said : "Ah ! my child, you are not a good girl ; God will punish you." The next day she said to Rose : "I don't want to send you back with nothing : go to the chicken-house, and take the eggs which say 'Do not take me.'"

Rose went to the chicken-house. All the eggs began to say : "Take me," "Don't take me ;" "Take me," "Don't take me." Rose was so bad that she said : "Ah, yes, you say 'Don't take me,' but you are precisely those I want." She took all the eggs which said "Don't take me," and she went away with them.

As she walked, she broke the eggs, and there came out a quantity of snakes, toads, frogs, which began to run after her. There were even a quantity of whips, which whipped her. Rose ran and shrieked. She arrived at her mother's so tired that she was not able to speak. When her mother saw all the beasts and the whips which were chasing her, she was so angry that she sent her away like a dog, and told her to go to live in the woods.

Alcée Fortier.